

Message Text

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AMCONSUL TIJUANA UNN

C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 8262

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SUBJECT: HANK GONZALEZ, CERVANTES DEL RIO AND THE PRESIDENTIAL
SUCCESSION

1. SUMMARY: CARLOS HANK GONZALEZ, THE ENORMOUSLY POPULAR(NOW)
EX-GOVERNOR OF STATE OF MEXICO, PROBABLY FAVORS A CERVANTES
DEL RIO PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDACY. HANK'S SUPPORT (GIVEN HIS
POPULARITY WITH BUSINESS SECTOR) WOULD BE HUGE ASSET TO CERVANTES
BUT WOULD ALSO BE MIXED BLESSING: HANK'S POPULARITY WOULD
DISTRACT FROM A CERVANTES CAMPAIGN WHOSE PURPOSE IS TO BUILD
PUBLIC IMAGE FOR NEXT PRESIDENT, AND PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA MAY
NOT APPROVE OF HANK'S CLOSEST ASSOCIATES. ALL SECOND ECHELON DIAZ
ORDAZ ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS-- "OUTS" WHO WANT BACK IN.
END SUMMARY.

2. ON SEPTEMBER 15 CARLOS HANK GONZALEZ LEFT GOVERNORSHIP OF
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STATE OF MEXICO OSTENSIBLY TO RETURN TO PRIVATE LIFE. HANK IS

UNIQUE AMONG MEXICAN POLITICIANS-HE HAS A POPULAR FOLLOWING WHICH CUTS ACROSS POLITICAL LINES. RECENT EDITION OF ESTABLISHMENT LEFT SIEMPRE FEATURED NORMAN ROCKWELL-TYPE PORTRAIT ON COVER. PRESS COVERAGE HAS BEEN ADULATORY. AT FINAL "INFORME" SEPT 5, TREASURY SEC LOPEZ PORTILLO COMPARED HANK TO PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA (WHICH JUST ISN'T DONE). NEWSPAPERS LAST TWO WEEKS HAVE BEEN SEVERAL PAGES THICKER DUE TO POLITICAL ADVERTISEMENTS FROM BUSINESS SECTOR THANKING HANK FOR HIS SERVICE TO STATE OF MEXICO.

3. HANK UNDOUBTEDLY HAS BEEN A GOOD GOVERNOR(AS ANY TOURIST WHO'S SEEN HIS FACELIFTING OF STATE OF MEXICO CAN TESTIFY) BUT HIS POPULARITY IS DUE TO HIS CONSUMMATE POLITICAL ABILITIES: HANK IS THE PROTOTYPE OF THE CENTRIST, NON-IDEOLOGICAL MEXICAN POLITICIAN WHO CAN BE ALL THINGS TO ALL PEOPLE AND ALL INTERESTS WITHOUT THE CONTRADICTIONS EVER BECOMING APPARENT. HIS PHYSICAL ATTRACTIVENESS AND MAGNETIC PERSONALITY, OF COURSE, HAVE BEEN GREAT ASSETS.

4. HANK'S ROLE IN AND RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ECHEVERRIA ADMINISTRATION HAS BEEN CURIOUS. SELECTED FOR GOVERNORSHIP OF MEXICO IN EARLY 1969, HANK WAS CHOICE OF DIAZ ORDAZ, NOT ECHEVERRIA. WHEREAS ECHEVERRIA CALLED HIS CLOSE POLITICAL ASSOCIATES IN FROM THE HINTERLAND TO TAKE FEDERAL EXECUTIVE POSITIONS (E.G, GALVEZ BETANCOURT FROM MICHOACAN) HANK WAS LEFT IN TOLUCA. THIS PROBABLY SUITED ECHEVERRIA JUST FINE; AFTER ALL, ECHEVERRIA TOOK ADVANTAGE OF FIRST OPPORTUNITY TO REMOVE THE OTHER BRIGHT POLITICAL LIGHT-ALFONSO MARTINEZ DOMINGUEZ-FROM FEDERAL DISTRICT REGENCY, A POSITION WITH ADVANTAGES FOR THE POLITICALLY AMBITIOUS. ALTHOUGH HANK WAS CONSTITUTIONALLY INELIGIBLE (FOREIGN BORN FATHER) FOR PRESIDENCY, IT TOOK A BLUNT PUTDOWN LAST FEBRUARY FROM PRI PRESIDENT REYES HEROLES TO KILL SPECULATION THAT HANK WAS A VIABLE CANDIDATE.

5. AT AGE 48, POLITICALLY UNEMPLOYED, AND OBVIOUSLY STILL AMBITIOUS, THE ROLE HANK WILL PLAY IN THE SUCCESSION HAS BEEN SUBJECT OF SOME SPECULATION. TWO QUESTIONS ARE PERTINENT-WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP WITH PRESIDENT CONFIDENTIAL

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ECHEVERRIA? AND WHICH CANDIDATE DOES HE FAVOR?

6. FROM VARIOUS SOURCES WE ARE LED TO BELIEVE HANK IS INCLINED TOWARDS A CERVANTES DEL RIO CANDIDACY: EVEN MOYA SUPPORTERS SAY SO. THE AMBASSADOR WAS RECENTLY TOLD HANK WOULD HEAD A CERVANTES CAMPAIGN. JUST HOW CLOSE THE TWO MEN PERSONALLY ARE IS UNKNOWN, (THEY ARE THE SAME AGE) BUT THE BASIS FOR A POLITICAL FRIENDSHIP IS

PRESENT- HANK WOULD BE AN ENORMOUS AID TO CERVANTES BECAUSE HIS PARTICIPATION WOULD BE REASSURING TO THE BUSINESS SECTOR, COMPENSATING FOR THEIR DISAPPOINTMENT AND DISQUIET SHOULD MOYA NOT BE THE CANDIDATE. IN TURN, CERVANTES' SELECTION WOULD ENSURE THE PROLONGATION OF HANK'S CAREER. BUT A PROMINENT HANK ROLE COULD HAVE ITS LIABILITIES FOR CERVANTES-HE MIGHT DISTRACT TOO MUCH ATTENTION DURING THE PERIOD WHEN ALL EFFORTS ARE TOWARD BUILDING A PUBLIC IMAGE AND FOLLOWING FOR THE NEXT PRESIDENT.

7. HANK'S RELATIONSHIP WITH ECHEVERRIA HAS BEEN TOUCHED ON: THE MEN APPARENTLY ARE NOT POLITICALLY OR PERSONALLY CLOSE, BUT HAVE MANAGED TO COOPERATE. CERTAINLY THE ECHEVERRIA ADMINISTRATION HAS FAVORED THE STATE OF MEXICO FINANCIALLY. BUT HANK'S POPULARITY MAY BOTHER THE PRESIDENT. (SEVERAL EDITORIALS (INSPIRED?) CHIDED LOPEZ PORTILLO FOR COMPARING HANK WITH THE PRESIDENT AND ECHEVERRIA RECENTLY SCOLDED THOSE WHO WERE EXCESSIVE IN THEIR PRAISE AND OTHERS WHO WERE EXTREME IN THEIR CON-DEMNATION OF HANK (THERE'S PRECIOUS LITTLE OF THE LATTER).

8. PERHAPS MORE IMPORTANT TO THE PRESIDENT MAY BE HANK'S ASSOCIATES, WHICH INCLUDE LARGE NUMBER WHO REACHED THEIR PEAK DURING THE GUSTAVO DIAZ ORDAZ (GDO) ADMINISTRATION (1964-1970). PROMINENT AMONG THESE ARE RAFAEL MORENO VALLE, JOSE ORTIZ AVILA, LEOPOLDO SANCHEZ CELIS, JUVENTINO CASTRO SANCHEZ, AND JESUS ROBLES MARTINEZ, WHOSE COMMON CHARACTERISTIC IS THEY WERE UNSUCCESSFUL IN ASPIRATIONS TO MOVE FROM SECOND ECHELON POSITIONS IN GDO'S ADMINISTRATION TO TOP ONES IN ECHEVERRIA'S. IN SHORT, THEY ARE STILL AMBITIOUS "OUTS".

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9. TO WHAT EXTENT CERVANTES TIES IN WITH THIS GROUP IS PROBLEMATIC, BUT AN EMBASSY CONTACT RECENTLY SAID THAT IT'S THE LEFTOVERS FROM GDO'S TERM THAT THE PRESIDENT HAS IN MIND WHEN HE SPEAKS OF THE "EMISSARIES OF THE PAST".

10. IF THIS STRING OF CONNECTING SUPPOSITIONS HOLDS TOGETHER, IT COULD MEAN THAT CERVANTES' SUPPORTERS (THROUGH HANK) CONSTITUTE HIS GREATEST LIABILITY. IN THAT RESPECT HE WOULD SHARE A CHARACTERISTIC WITH MOYA PALENCIA, WHOSE BUSINESS SUPPORT HAS BROUGHT THE TERM "NEO-ALEMANISM" INTO CURRENCY.

11. IT ALL ADDSUP TO AN INTERESTING SITUATION STILL IN FLUX IN WHICH THE PRESIDENT'S CONSIDERED JUDGEMENT

WILL BE THE PREDOMINANT FACTOR AMONG SEVERAL DETERMINING
HIS SUCCESSOR.
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